

CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES

CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS

Resolution 11

To Encourage Congress to Provide Adequate Funding for Court Interpretation Services

WHEREAS, in every state and territory throughout our nation, individuals look to state court and territorial systems to protect their rights and resolve legal issues and disputes in accord with the constitutional principles upon which this nation was founded; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) have historically recognized that when language barriers prevent essential communication and understanding, the fundamental principles of fairness, access to justice, and integrity of the judicial process are compromised; and

WHEREAS, the availability of qualified court interpretation services in judicial proceedings is fundamental to ensuring access to justice; and

WHEREAS, COSCA published a Policy Paper, *Court Interpretation: Fundamental to Access to Justice*, endorsed by CCJ, which identifies issues and key policies and practices, that state and territorial court leaders and policy makers need to address in order to develop effective court interpretation programs in their jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the Conferences, along with the National Center for State Courts, have focused on implementing the recommendations set forth in *Court Interpretation: Fundamental to Access to Justice*, and have worked collaboratively with the United States Department of Justice, related to Presidential Executive Order 13166 implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights of 1964, the American Bar Association, and others, in promoting other initiatives to enhance access to justice for limited English proficient individuals accessing the state courts; and

WHEREAS, those deliberations resulted in a summit of national leaders, including judicial teams representing 49 states, three territories and the District of Columbia, which was held in Houston, Texas in October 2012; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators remain committed to taking the steps necessary to implement *Court Interpretation: Fundamental to Access to Justice* recommendations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences encourage Congress to enact legislation, such as the State Court Interpreter Grant Program Act, which would provide direct funding to state and territorial courts to support court interpreter initiatives.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Access, Fairness and Public Trust Committee at the 2013 Annual Meeting on July 31, 2013.